

## House Republican Press Release

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### House Approves Identity Theft Bill Cosponsored By Rep. Harkins



The House of Representatives today approved legislation cosponsored by State Rep. John Harkins, R-Stratford, that would help protect Connecticut residents from Identity Theft. House Bill 5694, An Act Concerning The Unlawful Use Or Possession Of Scanning Devices And Reencoders, now moves the State Senate for consideration.

HB 5694 would require businesses to take reasonable steps to ensure any documents containing a customer's personal information are shredded or otherwise rendered unreadable. Under the bill, "personal information" includes such identifying information as a signature and Social Security, bank, and credit card numbers. It also requires disposal companies to take reasonable measures to protect against unauthorized access to personal information.

In addition, the bill prohibits using a scanner to read the information on a customer's payment card without permission or to use a reencoder to take information from a payment card and encode it on a different card without. It also authorizes the attorney general to sue to enforce the provisions and set criminal penalties for them.

"Advancements in technology have allowed for convenient, fast financial transactions for consumers and businesses alike, but has also provided opportunity to thieves," said Rep. Harkins. "Businesses must take necessary steps to protect customer account information or face the consequences. A person's private financial information should and must be handled securely and with ultimate discretion. This bill addresses some of the very concerns I continue to hear from constituents."